

South Dakota Reemployment Services

PY 2004

Part I

Background

The Reemployment Services grant has been a great help with the slowly recovering South Dakota economy. The nation's economy has been slowly recovering from the significant dip in PY 2002. Historically, our state follows the national economic trends, but the effects are less pronounced and seem to occur a few months later than the more populated areas. Our adjusted monthly unemployment rates in PY2003 have been slightly higher than usual, averaging 3.5% over the year, and peaking at 4.0% in December and March. While this may not seem high by national standards, one needs to remember that many agricultural jobs, which are prevalent here, are not covered by unemployment insurance.

While the implementation of the call center to simplify the application process for unemployment insurance claims has allowed us to shift a good deal of the claims-taking and follow-up functions to the center, our requirement that claimants conduct a work search still brings the majority into our centers seeking services. Often, if the claimant is required to do work search, they are directly referred to their nearest SD Career Center for work registration and reemployment services, if appropriate. The reemployment grant allowed us to focus assessment, Job Search Assistance Program, and other placement services specifically toward claimants at the local SD level.

Our strategy to target five communities for reemployment services seems to have been successful. We selected the areas of the state with the highest historic caseloads and concentrated our resources there. Our projections indicate that by maintaining our current strategy, we will expend the funds in a timely and responsible manner. The need for reemployment services continues to exceed their availability. If resources were available, we would provide these services in all 16 of South Dakota's Career Centers.

Design

The design of South Dakota's reemployment effort will not change in PY 2004. We will continue to fund approximately 5 staff positions in the 5 most active claimant areas of the state. These 5 staff will continue to focus their reemployment services on UI claimants. Assessment, job counseling, labor market information, enrollment in training programs, job referral etc. will continue to be offered to claimants.

Job Search Assistance Programs (JSAPs) are seminars designed to assist job seekers in conducting an effective search for employment. Private non-profit organizations affiliated with each local SD Career Center will again receive contracts to provide JSAP sessions to profiled UI claimants. Claimants will also be introduced to our resource rooms. Each SD Career Center maintains a resource room full of self-help aids for job seekers. Claimants and the general public can take advantage of videos, computer resume programs, copiers, fax machines, telephones etc. that assist them to conduct a proper job search.

Timelines

In PY 2004, designated staff in each of the five selected SD Career Centers will continue to complete the activities described above. Contracts with local private non-profit groups for the provision of JSAP sessions will be negotiated in the first quarter of PY 2004. Services were not disrupted as carryover PY 2003 funds were used to continue the seminars and to support local SD Career Center staff.

Progress will be reported to USDOL on a quarterly basis using the same criteria outlined in the PY 2003 grant. The SDWORKS system provides progress reports to our SD Career Centers on a monthly basis so that local office managers can monitor staff progress.

Linkages

The primary partners in this effort are the SD Department of Labor's Unemployment Insurance Division, the SD Career Centers in Aberdeen, Northeast Area (Watertown), Rapid City, Sioux Falls, and Vermillion, and the five private-non profit Career Learning Centers in these communities. All of these entities are linked through the new SDWORKS computer management information system.

In three of these communities, the non-profit Career Learning Centers are collocated in the SD Career Center with the Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance functions of SDDOL. In the largest communities of Rapid City and Sioux Falls, the Career Learning Centers are not collocated, however the contracted JSAP sessions are provided in the SD Career Center.

Service Delivery

Profiled claimants are identified through SDWORKS. Local SD Career Centers are notified of all claimants in their service area. Identified claimants are notified that they must visit their local SD Center to participate in reemployment activities. JSAPs are conducted on a regular basis in each of these locations by contracted private non-profit Career Learning Centers. The JSAP sessions are open to the public and are held in the SD Career Center.

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Selected claimants receive one-on-one assistance from a designated Employment Representative in the five designated Reemployment grant centers. Employment Representatives will "case manage" claimants in an effort to facilitate a rapid return to the labor force.

Performance Measures

Performance under this initiative is evaluated using two outcome measures: the number of UI claimants completing Job Search Assistance seminars, and the percentage of Unemployment Insurance claimants placed into employment by the SD Career Centers.

In PY 2003, 1133 UI claimants completed JSAP seminars. Our projected goal was 1000 claimants. The continuation of increased unemployment in the lagging PY 2003 economy may account for the difference.

At the end of PY 2003, our management information system indicated that 30% of UI claimants entered employment. Our projected goal was 28%. The results at the end of each of the first three quarters showed growth in this area as the year progressed, with 14%, 20%, and 26% respectively, ending the year at 30%.

Part II

Remaining PY 2003 funds

PY 2002 funds were carried over due to a delay in receiving PY 2003 funds. South Dakota was fortunate to have adequate carryover PY2002 funds to maintain services to our customers without interruption. The remaining funds were used to support the five field positions in the designated South Dakota Career Centers, and to provide continued financial support for JSAP seminars through the Career Learning Center contracts. These funds were fully expended as of 9/30/2004.

Changes to Plan

South Dakota does not anticipate any changes to the reemployment plan. Normal increases in salaries, benefits, rent etc. are expected to obligate any carryover funds.

Performance Measures

In PY 2004 South Dakota expects 1000 UI claimants to complete JSAP seminars, and 28% of UI claimants placed in jobs. The projected number of claimants completing JSAP seminars is the same as was projected for last year, but less than the actual number that completed. The projected PY 2004 figures reflects our optimistic view that South Dakota's economy will see significant recovery and the number of persons receiving unemployment insurance benefits will be less than in PY 2003.

The percentage of UI claimants placed in jobs is a figure taken from the ES 9002 report. This measurement reflects the percentage for the entire state.